

DETAILED ACTION

The previous office action contained errors in regards to the reference used for the rejection. This is a new office action with corrections made and the time for response will be reset so that the applicant's can properly respond to the office action.

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election with traverse of Invention II in the reply filed on 5/1/08 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that both the method and apparatus claims are related to foodstuffs. This is not found persuasive because apparatus claims are examined upon the structural limitations and not the material worked upon, in this case, the apparatus can be used for materials other than foodstuffs including clay or any other moldable materials.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

2. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

3. Claims 8, 19, 34, 51, 56, 63-67, 83-84, 86, and 88 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Fay (4957425).

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Fay teaches a molding device having a drum 13 with mold cavities 14 and sintered metal 17 for a porous layer that allows for air pass through and support gas supply means 22.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

4. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

5. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

6. Claims 49, 68, 85, 87, and 89-118 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Fay (4957425) in view of Murphy (6042361), Orlowski (3941538) in view of Caldwell (206771).

Fay teaches a molding device having a drum 13 with mold cavities 14 and sintered metal 17 for a porous layer that allows for air pass through and support gas supply means 22.

Fay fails to teach inserts made of flexible elastomer, and a release device.

Orlowski teaches the use of a rotating drum used for molding materials, each mold cavity having a plastic member 30 that is secured by a metal ring 30a in each opening 29. At the 6 o'clock position of the drum, the mold member 28 is extended such that formed mass is removed by shear removal and deposited onto a conveyor 12.

Caldwell teaches cutters K and M and that moves to remove the product from the mold cavities C of the drum. Here, one skilled in the art would recognize the cutter K and the conveyor A are both positioned parallel to the movement of the rotating cavity and would pass through the axis as it moves in to remove the product from the mold surface.

It would have been obvious for one of ordinary skill in the art to modify Fay with the plastic material as taught by Orlowski for providing a wear resistance element for the drum, and release device as taught by both Orlowski and Caldwell that shows the release device that would pass through the axis of the turning device thereby allowing for removal of the element.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Jonovic 4684040, Aoki 4828863, Harreither 5382145, Kuss 5462425.

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8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Emmanuel S. Luk whose telephone number is (571)272-1134. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Fridays from 9 to 5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Yogendra N. Gupta can be reached on (571) 272-1316. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Yogendra N Gupta/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 1791

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